

Israel Selected to Chair a UN Committee

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Rothman Applauds Selection of Israel to Chair a UN Committee

Follows His Work since '90s to End Israel's Second-Class Status at UN

(Washington, DC)—Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) this week was proud to vote for H.Res.624, legislation congratulating the State of Israel on chairing a United Nations (UN) committee for the first time in history. Rothman described the recent selection of an Israeli diplomat, Mr. Ron Adam, to chair the Committee on Program and Coordination (CPC) as another step forward in the long-running battle against anti-Israel bias at the UN.

"This leadership position is a significant victory for the State of Israel, the U.S.'s number one ally in the Middle East. The UN has a long history of applying a double standard to Israel and singling out the Jewish State for criticism. The selection by this 33 member body to have an Israeli representative chair a committee they work on shows progress, especially because it includes countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel. I am hopeful that the UN will end its unfair treatment of Israel as more UN members are afforded the opportunity to see this democratic nation as an equal partner and work closely with Israeli diplomats," said Rothman.

This success was made possible by Israel's admission in 2000 into the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG), which gave it the right to apply for positions on UN committees. During the late 1990s, Rothman and others lobbied hard for the State of Israel to be admitted to the WEOG bloc after it was consistently denied full admission into its own group, the Asian Regional Group. In 1999, as part of that effort, Rothman also introduced the Equality for Israel at the UN Act of 2000, legislation to increase pressure on the U.S. Ambassador to the UN to help Israel gain membership in WEOG.

Continuing his work to promote fair treatment of Israel at the UN, in 2005 Rothman sponsored legislation condemning the anti-Israel bias at the UN, which was passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives by a vote of 400 to 1. In urging passage of his bill, the Congressman highlighted the fact that about 30% of the resolutions passed annually by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) target only one country, the State of Israel. In comparison, the UNGA pays little attention to the genocides in Sudan, Bosnia, and Rwanda, or the human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tibet, and Cuba.

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